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# THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

By

JANE SNOWDEN CROSBY



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By  
**JANE SNOWDEN CROSBY**

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THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA



## FOREWORD

In writing this account of the Seatons of western Pennsylvania, I am deeply conscious of my mother's love and interest for the people of Franklin--a feeling which she gave to me and which first turned my thoughts toward this objective.

I am grateful to Helen Alexander Burr, without whose talent and industry the material for this account could not have been collected; I am grateful, as well, to Emma Gilfillan Thomas whose unfailing memory and encouragement pushed me on; I am grateful to Anna Dale Alexander who made available much of the material that I used; to Eliza Middleton Watts, to Lydia Seaton Shaffer, to Eliza Fassett Salter, to Mabel Chadwick Preston, to Lauretta L. Lamberton, to Emma B. Jackson, to Jessica C. Ferguson, to Dorothy Grant Hosford, to William O. Milton, to Louise Hanna, to Dr. Charles Upson Clark, to Lenore E. Flower, to J. A. Ullo, to the Franklin Library, to the State Library and Museum at Harrisburg, and to the Register and Recorder's Office of Butler County, Pennsylvania.

My work was aided immeasurably by the notes left by Eliza McClelland Dale, Eliza Dale Mid-

dleton, Margaret Lamberton Hukill, Amberson Seaton, Samuel T. Seaton, Oren A. Seaton, Emily Woodburn Crosby,\* and George Randolph Snowden.

Jane Snowden Crosby

Bradford, Pennsylvania  
July 1, 1945

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\*My mother.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

In every family there are legends. Told by mother to daughter or by father to son, they live in each generation, becoming more picturesque as the original characters step further into the past. Each child who listened--by candlelight, by gaslight, and later in a room lit by electricity--had his imagination stirred by hearing the old story. Each child, in turn, gave something of his own quality to the narrative when he told it again. In this way a legend gathers vitality. It cannot be reduced to bare facts; rather, it attaches to itself a certain bloom like that found on very fine, old furniture which has been carefully tended and polished.

Yet most legends retain their simplicity. In a family of Irish or Scottish descent, legends live more richly perhaps than in less imaginative strains, yet they do not become elaborate. They recur like a bright and persistent thread in the family story.

In the Seaton family the legend of George Seaton and Lady Nancy Amberson has come down through five generations.

When Anna Dale Alexander was a little girl, her mother, Eliza McClelland Dale, told her that HER mother, Agnes Seaton McClelland, related how

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

George Seaton of County Tyrone, Ireland, and Lady Nancy Amberson fell in love and eloped. They were married in Dranity,\* County Tyrone, and came to America, where they settled on a farm near Ligonier, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania.

Agnes Seaton McClelland told her daughter Eliza that she remembered when her mother's sisters came to visit in Pennsylvania. They were named Amberson, and they were beautifully dressed. The little girl Agnes recalled that her mother "stood in the doorway, watching her sisters out of sight and seemed very sad."\*\* "When they went away they did not look back."\*\*\* Nancy Amberson Seaton never saw any of her relatives from Ireland again. She\*\*\*\* was very much opposed to runaway matches.

Beyond doubt, the harsh life of a new society, just emerging from the frontier stage when Agnes Seaton was a little girl (1785-1790)\*\*\*\*\* contributed to her mother's feeling--that and too frequent childbearing, since Agnes was the eleventh (or twelfth) child. Used to a milder climate and to gentler ways in Ireland, George

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\*According to Amberson Seaton, grandson of George Seaton.

\*\*Letter of Eliza McClelland Dale (Mrs. Samuel F., dec.) Franklin, Pa., June 1895.

\*\*\*Anna Dale Alexander (Mrs. Thomas) Franklin, Pa., December, 1944.

\*\*\*\*Eliza McClelland Dale (Mrs. Samuel F.) Franklin, Pa., June, 1895

\*\*\*\*\*According to Franklin, Pa., Old Cemetery Roll, Agnes Seaton was born in 1780.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Seaton's wife must have often questioned the wisdom of runaway matches; and this hard kernel of realism has come down to us, also, inserted into the legend of their romantic marriage.

Whether young George Seaton and his wife with the beautiful name came to America immediately after their marriage, as the legend would lead one to infer, has not been established. Certainly it is more picturesque to think of them as slipping away from Belfast or Galway, leaving family and fortune behind, as early as 1759, when one assumes their marriage occurred.

At that time voyages to America took from four to twelve weeks, during which a diet of hard biscuits, salt beef, pork with beans and potatoes constituted the common ship's fare. Often family groups or groups of friends undertook the voyage together. From the eastern ports of Baltimore and Philadelphia, they plodded westward in patient caravans along the rough highways.

Since the time of their acquisition in 1681, the Penns had encouraged settlers to come to Pennsylvania; and they came by thousands--from England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany and France.

The Scotch, the Irish, and the Scotch-Irish, to which group the Seatons belonged, did not get along well with the Quakers in eastern Pennsylvania, so they pushed out to the frontiers, farther west than the region where the Germans settled. They were more aggressive than the Germans or Quakers--more restless and less tolerant. Hardy men, they were able fighters, easily angered and as easily won to friendship. The early population of western Pennsylvania has been spoken of as chiefly Scotch-Irish, but re-

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

cent studies show that there were really more of English stock. Perhaps the fiery energy and quick temperament of the Scotch-Irish made them seem greater in numbers than other groups. In what appears a contradiction of temperament, they were always to the fore in any fights which took place and were also most prominent in the religious development of the new communities.\*

Although George Seaton may have come to America soon after his marriage, accounts from several sources\*\* indicate that George, his wife and children, together with his brothers, Thomas and Alexander, came considerably later, in 1778, settling in the Ligonier valley, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Other accounts\*\*\* state that he settled at Ligonier after the Revolutionary War and that his brothers, Thomas and Alexander, settled in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

Continuing this last thread of evidence, it is possible that the Seatons arrived before the Revolutionary War. They may have gone south, through the Cumberland or Shenandoah valleys, following the course taken by so many of the Scotch-Irish who settled in Virginia before com-

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\*Background taken from PIONEER LIFE IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA by J. E. Wright and Doris S. Corbett, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press.

\*\*Eliza Middleton Watts, Chicago, Dec. 12, 1944; Eliza Dale Middleton, Chicago (dec.); Anna Dale Alexander (Mrs. Thomas), Franklin, Pa.; Margaret Lamberton Hukill (Mrs. George P.), Franklin, Pa. (dec.); THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton.

\*\*\*Amberson Seaton (dec.).

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

ing into Pennsylvania. Perhaps the Seatons lived in Westmoreland County, Virginia, for some years before their arrival in the Ligonier valley. Possibly the Amberson sisters\* who came to visit their sister Nancy had also settled in Virginia, and journeyed to Pennsylvania from there and not from Ireland.

The ownership of Greene, Washington, Fayette, parts of Allegheny and Westmoreland counties in Pennsylvania was in dispute for years. By Royal Charter, Virginia claimed those counties and encouraged settlement by granting fifty acres of land free to each settler. Pennsylvania was more interested in profit from the land than in settlement, and resented occupation by Virginians. This dispute was not settled until 1780, when Pennsylvania recognized the rights of those who had taken up lands under the Virginia grants.\*\* It is possible that George Seaton was one of those settlers, provided he came first to Virginia before his establishment at Ligonier.

Another possibility exists that George Seaton obtained land through one of the speculators who organized settlement companies and had laws passed to aid settlement. Washington was one of the most prominent of those speculators in land and was the closest rival of George Croghan, who was probably the greatest of them all in the period before the Revolution.\*\*\* It is possible

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\*Suggestion of Helen Alexander Burr (Mrs. James R.), Franklin, Pa.

\*\*PIONEER LIFE IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA by J. E. Wright and Doris S. Corbett.

\*\*\*George Croghan died in 1782.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

that George Seaton had some acquaintance with George Croghan, who had also come from Ireland to America, in 1740. A grandson\* of George Seaton was named for the famous trader and speculator in land.

During the Revolutionary War the Pennsylvania land office was closed, and no sales were made to speculators or settlers until 1784 when quitrents were abolished and a man could purchase four hundred acres of land selling at ten pounds for one hundred acres. By treaty in 1784, the Indian lands were made available to settlers at a price of thirty pounds for one hundred acres. The Penns were divested of their holdings in Pennsylvania in 1779.

Bearing these facts in mind, it seems reasonable that George Seaton and his family did not settle in the Ligonier valley till after the war, as Amberson Seaton states, unless they came to America sometime before the Revolution and moved into the Ligonier valley before the beginning of hostilities. The exact date of the Seatons' arrival seems difficult to establish; it may have been as early as 1759 when a migration was already in swing to America; it may have occurred during the 1760's or as late as 1778. The only sort of clue we have is Amberson Seaton's statement that the fourth child, Elizabeth, was twelve years old and died soon after landing.

However, the Ligonier valley, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, became the eventual place of settlement, either before or after the Revo-

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\*Major George Croghan McClelland.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

lution, but probably not during that time. In 1772 the settlement at Ligonier contained one hundred families, one of which may have been the Seatons.

The forebears of George Seaton probably came from Scotland to Ireland after the expulsion of the Stuarts or at the time of the Ulster Plantation, in 1607. Practically all the family and general accounts state that the Seatons were a Scottish family. Jessica C. Ferguson, Genealogist at the State Library and Museum at Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, reports: "The name Seton or Seaton is that of a very old Scottish family who were originally from Normandie."\*\*

The name has been spelled in twenty-five different ways, including Seatoun, Seytoun, Seyton, Seton, Seaton and Seeton, depending upon the different localities in which members were settled. Those who went to Germany during the trials of the Stuarts spelled the name Seytoun; the immigrants to Ireland and England usually write the name Seaton; while the Scottish branch--as opposed to the Scotch-Irish--spell it Seton or Seeton.

Shakespeare and Sir Walter Scott both used the name for characters; Shakespeare in MACBETH and Scott in THE ABBOT, and both spelled it Sey-

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\*Letter to Helen Alexander Burr, Jan. 29, 1945.

\*\*According to Monsignor Robert Seaton, quoted in THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton, the place was Argentan.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

ton. In Buchanan's HISTORY OF SCOTLAND the name appears in several spellings; in the ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA it is spelled Seton.

In the north of England there are several places that have been given the name Seaton\* which appears on maps as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; and in Devonshire there is a watering place named Seaton; while in the United States there are a number of towns bearing the name--in Kentucky, Tennessee, Illinois, Nebraska and Oregon.

Samuel T. Seaton, whose sketch appears in THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton, and who was a lawyer and newspaper publisher in Olathe, Kansas, at the time of the book's publication in 1906, states in a letter\*\* that Seaton is a place name, derived from a manor farm in North Yorkshire, England. "This farm," he writes, "was held by our remote ancestor under a grant of land from the Bruces, which explains their 'to the finish' loyalty to the house of Bruce and his descendants, the Stuarts. My father's first cousin, Samuel Seaton, who still occupies the old Seaton home near Killigordon, Ireland, and who is a press correspondent and a considerable writer for magazines, tells me that our branch settled in County Tyrone; that our remote ancestor was closely related to a titled branch of the family in Scotland, and on the expulsion of the Stuarts fled to France and later came to County Tyrone, Ireland."

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\*THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton.

\*\*To Eliza Dale Middleton (dec.), Apr. 14, 1907.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Letters were also exchanged between Samuel T. Seaton and Margaret Lamberton Hukill who remarked that a photograph of Samuel T. Seaton showed considerable resemblance to Samuel Harkness Lamberton, her brother. This resemblance is noted because of the fact that the ancestors of Samuel T. Seaton and also of George Seaton were settled in County Tyrone; this combination of circumstance--settlement and resemblance of descendants--indicates a relationship which is borne out in a letter\* stating that Jared Seaton, the great-grandfather of Samuel T. Seaton, was a brother of George.

The titled branch of the Setons in Scotland, to which Samuel T. Seaton referred, is probably the ancient family of Seton which has been linked with the brightest and most tragic moments of Scottish history. This family has been chronicled in AN OLD FAMILY, THE SETONS OF SCOTLAND AND AMERICA by Monsignor Robert Seton,\*\* Brentano's, 1899, who was a well-known scholar and genealogist and a descendant of this line.

Monsignor Seton suggests that the Setons were a Highland clan, while the Seatons belonged to a great Lowland family. However, in his introduction to THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton, Monsignor Seton speaks of Oren A. Seaton as a "kinsman."

The story of the Setons from whom Monsignor Seton is descended is extremely picturesque.

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\*To Eliza Dale Middleton (dec.), Apr. 14, 1907.

\*\*Grandson of William and "Mother" Elizabeth Ann Seton.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Beginning with Sir Christopher Seton, III, who was knighted by Robert Bruce, the family's attachment to the bruces and later to the Stuarts covers the years from 1301 to 1714. Sir William Seton owned large tracts of land in the Lothians and had a castle, known as Niddry Castle or Seton's Niddry, between Edinburgh and Linlithgow, which the Stuart kings and Mary, Queen of Scots, often visited. The Setons remained faithful to the Scottish Queen during all the stormy trials of her life; and the only daughter of George, sixth Lord Seton, was one of the four Marys who attended her.

Sir Walter Scott describes Mary Seton as "a most modest young lady of sixteen, with soft and brilliant deep blue eyes, well formed eyebrows, rich wavy tresses, of excellent shape, bordering perhaps on embonpoint, and therefore rather a Hebe than a Sylph, but beautifully formed, with round and taper fingers." This Mary Seton and her brother assisted the Queen in her escape from Lochleven castle.

The words of an old ballad, founded on the dying lament of one of the four Marys who attended the Queen, are often quoted. In them one hears the plaintive quality which runs through so many of the Scottish ballads:

Yestere'en the Queen had four Maries,  
This night she'll have but three;  
There was Mary Seton, and Mary Beton,  
And Mary Carmichael and me.

Mary Seton shared in the captivity of her Queen, in Scotland, France and England; but finally in 1583 she obtained permission to retire

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

from the Queen's services and became a nun at Saint Pierre-aux-Dames, in Rheims.

A Seton church which survived the Reformation is mentioned as early as 1246 and enclosed for many years the tomb of Mary Seton's family. This church was situated near the seacoast, about twelve miles below Edinburgh. St. Benedict, or Bennet, was the family's patron saint.

In THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton are reproductions of both the Seton and Seaton coats of arms. The characteristic crescents and crosses appear on both; the sheaf of wheat, signifying the bond of mutual interest and love, and the branches of holly appear on both, also. A John Seaton who came to America from Ireland brought a copper plate of the Seaton coat of arms; and a James Seaton of the Charleston Navy Yard owned a copper plate from which copies were made in 1830.

The Seaton tartan in Scotland is said to have been principally of a red color, with small lines or stripes of green, purple and white. A piece of Seaton tartan is owned by Anna Dale Alexander at the present time.

After the accession of the House of Hanover in 1715, the lands and properties of families loyal to the Stuarts were confiscated, and many of the sons were killed or imprisoned, while still others escaped to neighboring countries. The ancestors of George Seaton may have gone to Ireland at this time, as Samuel T. Seaton suggests, or they may have gone at an earlier period.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

The parents of George Seaton were James\* and Martha Seaton who lived at a place called Dranity, in County Tyrone, Ireland. James Seaton was a man of some wealth and had twelve children, all boys. They were George, Thomas, Alexander, William, James, Robert, David, Jared,\*\* John, Hezekiah, Joel and Nathaniel.

The number of Bible names given to the boys would seem to indicate that this Seaton family was Protestant. Amberson Seaton, a grandson of George Seaton, states that some of the family are buried in the Episcopalian churchyard at Johnstown, Pennsylvania. According to another source,\*\*\* the family of Nancy Amberson was Lutheran, while George's family belonged to the Church of England. "So both young people were disinherited and disowned by their parents."\*\*\*\*

Probably this difference in religion accounts for the fact that Nancy Amberson was cut off from her family after her marriage. However, it seems likely to suppose that her family was Calvinist and not Lutheran, as the Lutheran faith belonged more to the Continent than to the British Isles, whereas Calvinism waxed strong in Scotland and in the north of Ireland.

Religious differences have often, if not always, assumed the proportions of a barrier in Ireland; and it would not be unusual if some bitterness over religion--as well as great dis-

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\*THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton, 1906.

\*\*Great-grandfather of Samuel T. Seaton.

\*\*\*THE SEATON FAMILY.

\*\*\*\*Ibid.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

tance--served to separate Nancy Amberson from her family.

Perhaps the name Amberson holds some magnetic attraction for legends and romance, since the prefix "Amber" must always carry a connotation of things rare and beautiful. At any rate, Amberson Seaton suggests\* that a large fortune was left to Nancy by her family in Ireland. The death of her parents took place a short time before Nancy's own--probably about 1799 or 1800--and the estate was not settled during her lifetime, and George Seaton could not claim it.

Amberson Seaton insists that this fortune has "lain in Ireland for one hundred and seven or eight years and that there is a considerable fortune in cotton for some branch of the Seatons." He states that W. J. Seaton tried to secure this fortune in 1861, but was not successful, receiving an answer from the court that another Seaton had tried to secure it and had also failed. Yet Amberson Seaton maintains that this fortune is there if the correct evidence of descent can be established.

Though the fortune may have "lain" waiting all those years in Ireland, it is probable that George Seaton and his wife Nancy found more of work than of fortune in the America to which they came. Many other Seatons immigrated to America also--from England, Scotland and Ireland. Since for many years the face of Ireland has turned toward America, a further migration there became a natural consequence.

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\*Letter to Margaret Lamberton Hukill (Mrs. George P., dec.,) July 29, 1907.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Two brothers, John and Andrew Seaton, went from Scotland to Tellahoago, County Tyrone, Ireland. Later, John, with his family, came to America in 1729, settling in Massachusetts. His brother Andrew came in 1740, settling in New Hampshire. It is possible that they were brothers of James Seaton, the father of George, as all came from County Tyrone.

In one account\* it is stated that a Thomas Seaton came to America in 1753. He lived in Carlisle, Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, for about two years and then came "west," where he stayed at Fort Ligonier every night before settling his homestead. One of his children is supposed to have been born in the Fort. He died May 20, 1820, aged eighty-four years, making the year of his birth 1736. His wife's name was Margaret, and they had a number of children. He is buried at Ligonier. This Thomas Seaton may have been a brother of George; the fact that both were at Ligonier indicates a possible relationship.

Concerning him, Oren A. Seaton writes as follows: "Thomas and his wife were working in a cornfield when the Indians got between them and their guns. The wife, who was a very large woman, got in first, running in a single path. A stranger who was with them was shot and killed by the Indians. George Seaton often showed his granddaughter (afterwards Mrs. Morrow) where the

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\*HISTORY OF OLD WESTMORELAND by Hassler, note supplied by Mabel Chadwick Preston (Mrs. George K.) and Lauretta L. Lamberton, Drexel Hill, Pa.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

stranger was buried, a mile from Ligonier, between Mile Creek and St. Clair's furnace."

An Alexander Seaton who settled in America and died March 7, 1822 left land to a Thomas Seaton, but this Thomas cannot have been the one who died in 1820; probably the land was left to a son of that Thomas Seaton. A note\* states that the Alexander Seaton who died in 1822 was forty years old at that time, so the supposition follows that he was not old enough to have been a brother of George; probably he was a relative.

If the Thomas Seaton who lived first at Carlisle and then at Ligonier was a brother of George--and if the date 1753 is correct for his coming to America--then one may assume that George followed his brother's lead and perhaps came to Ligonier because Thomas Seaton had already settled there. This supposition would establish a reason for George's coming into the Ligonier valley. It is possible that George and Nancy, also, came first to Carlisle upon their arrival in America; that they remained there for some time, following Thomas and his family into Westmoreland County.

However, a search by Lenore E. Flower (Mrs. Guiles) of Carlisle, a member of the Pennsylvania Genealogical Society, has yielded no trace of the residence of George Seaton in Cumberland County, though records show that a Robert Seaton was married to Jane McCabe in 1798\*\* and that an Alexander Setting (or Seaton) was married to

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\*Lauretta L. Lamberton, Drexel Hill, Pa.

\*\*First Presbyterian Church, Carlisle, Pa.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Mary Forster in 1768.\* Further investigation by Mrs. Flower mentions a legacy given by a Thomas Seaton in 1702 to the Philadelphia Meeting of Friends "for the use of the poor and fatherless children, widows and orphans among Friends."

This legacy is again mentioned in 1717 and in 1719, but the Thomas Seaton who made it was too old to have been a brother of George. The name of Alexander Seaton appears as a witness to a will, recorded in Philadelphia in 1746. The Colonial Troop list of the French and Indian wars gives the name of a John Seton, born in Scotland and aged twenty-six in 1759, who probably served from Cumberland County.

Many of the families who settled later in Westmoreland, Washington and Allegheny counties came into those sections from Cumberland County, and Mrs. Flower's research mentions the will of one, Thomas Seaton, who died in Moon township, Allegheny County, October 21, 1811. As heirs, he names his wife Margaret and a daughter, also Margaret. This Thomas Seaton may have been the one who settled in Carlisle in 1753, as the wives' names agree and his age would be reasonable. If this assumption is correct, he may have been a brother of George, though the brother of George is said to have been buried at Ligonier.

In 1843, a Mathew Seetin sold land in Carlisle to Rufus E. Shapley of the same place. This is the only Seaton record obtainable of wills, administrations, guardianships, sales,

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\*German Reformed Church of Cumberland County.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

partitions of estate, etc., for Cumberland County.

A number of Setons and Seatons had also immigrated to Virginia, among them the ancestors of Monsignor Seton, who obtained patents of land in Westmoreland, Gloucester and King William counties in 1635, 1637 and 1662.

By 1790 the population of southwestern Pennsylvania had reached ninety thousand and was almost wholly agricultural, no town containing more than four hundred inhabitants. The population of Westmoreland County had reached sixteen thousand; Greensburg was laid out in 1785 and became the county seat in 1787. Within half a century, the southern section of western Pennsylvania from a wilderness occupied by Indians, hunters, traders and trappers had become a safe home for the overflow of population from the south and west.\*

However, if the Seatons were settled in the Ligonier Valley before the Revolution, they very likely lived in one of the log cabins of the frontier, seldom larger than twenty by thirty feet and one and a half stories high, which became the symbol of American traditions. It is probable that they often sought refuge in Fort Ligonier, one of the chain of forts erected by the settlers in 1759.

Gradually comforts multiplied. New equipment, fabrics and tools were brought from the east to soften the rigors of frontier life, and

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\*Background taken from PIONEER LIFE IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA by J. E. Wright and Doris S. Corbett, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

by 1790 southwestern Pennsylvania had ceased to be the "backwoods." The census of 1790 gives the names of many Seatons who were found around Philadelphia and in nearby counties, as well as in Westmoreland.

George Seaton was a farmer\* and also understood weaving. His brother Thomas kept a store in Johnstown, and Alexander, the other brother reported to have come to America, ran a tannery there. According to Oren A. Seaton, Alexander located later in Washington, D.C., but nothing is known as to his descendants. However, Amberson Seaton states that he willed his property to his nephew Robert who had learned the tanner's trade with him.

A number of accounts\*\* indicate that George Seaton and his brothers Thomas and Alexander saw service in the Revolutionary War. Amberson Seaton states\*\*\* that George served as a captain, Thomas as a lieutenant and Alexander as first sergeant. He says that they served in the same company, in Lafayette's division of the Virginia Troops.

According to the historian, Stephen Bonsal, the French Archives contain a complete roster of the officers of French regiments who served under Rochambeau and St. Simon, but Lafayette was

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\*Eliza McClelland Dale (Mrs. Samuel F., dec.), Franklin, Pa., June, 1895.

\*\*THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton.

\*\*\*Letter to Margaret L. Hukill (Mrs. George P., dec.), July 29, 1907.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

rated as an American officer, and with one or two exceptions the men under him were Americans. Stephen Bonsal doubts the existence of such a roster for the Americans serving with Lafayette. At that time\* Virginia claimed all southwestern Pennsylvania as part of the West Augusta district. Amberson Seaton states that the three brothers were expecting promotion when they received word that the war was over.

So far it has not been possible to obtain positive evidence supporting this claim, although it is certain that a number of Seatons served in the Revolutionary War--even a number who were named "George."

There was a George Seaton pensioned as a sergeant in Greene County, Pennsylvania, for service in the Second Pennsylvania Militia; this George Seaton was pensioned in 1832, but as George Seaton, the husband of Nancy Amberson, died in 1826, this pension must refer to the service of another. Also, the fact\*\* that he was taxed as a single man in 1781 seems to eliminate him as the George Seaton who established the family at Ligonier.

The name of George Seaton\*\*\* appears on a list of men between the ages of eighteen and fifty-three, Captain Crawford's company, between Whitley's and Muddy Creek, Washington County, War of the Revolution. The name of George Seaton ap-

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\*Jessica C. Ferguson, State Library and Museum, Harrisburg, Pa.

\*\*Ibid.

\*\*\*Ibid.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

pears, also, in the second class of Captain William Crawford's company, fifth battalion, upon another list. This company was "ordered to rendezvous" \* at Jackson's Fort, May 17, 1782. Since Washington County had been created from Westmoreland in 1781, it may have been that this George Seaton is the one who settled at Ligonier and is reported by Amberson as having served with his brothers Thomas and Alexander.

A singular coincidence \*\* regarding the personnel of Captain William Crawford's company is that a Richard Seton was lieutenant; a Francis Seton was ensign; a James Seton was clerk; and a George Seton (or Seaton) served in the seventh class of the same company. Whether these men were related is not known; the names Richard and Francis are not given among the brothers of George Seaton, but they may have been relatives.

The name George Seaton also appears on an undated list \*\*\* of Captain Benjamin Harrison's company of volunteers from Fauquier County, Virginia. Records \*\*\*\* show that one Augustine Seaton (name also borne as George Augustine Seaton) served as quartermaster, Captain Cleon Moore's company, Grayson's Regiment, Continental Troops, a Vir-

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\*Penn Archives, 6th Series, Vol. II, pp. 166, 172, 182.

\*\*Jessica C. Ferguson, State Library and Museum, Harrisburg, Pa., Letter to Helen Alexander Burr, Feb. 7, 1945.

\*\*\*Adjutant General's Office, Washington, D.C., J. A. Ullo, letter to Jane S. Crosby, Feb. 15, 1945.

\*\*\*\*Ibid.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

ginia organization commanded by Colonel William Grayson. The date of his entry into service is not known, but his pay which appears to have been in Pennsylvania currency commenced May 25, 1777.

Other records from the Adjutant General's office show that one Thomas Seaton served as a private in Captain John Syme's company, tenth Virginia Regiment, commanded by Colonel Edward Stevens. He enlisted January 6, 1777 for three years; was reported sick in hospital at Morristown in June, 1777, and the muster roll for August 31, 1777, bears the remark "Invilade" after his name. The date of his discharge or further service is not known. The name of Alexander Seaton has not been found on the records on file in the Adjutant General's office of Virginia soldiers or soldiers from any other state.

There were, however, a number of other Seatons\* whose Revolutionary War service is recorded in the Pennsylvania Archives, Vol. XXIII. Among them are Benjamin Seaton, Westmoreland County; Richard Seaton, Northumberland County; Isaac Seaton, Northumberland County; and William Seaton, Northumberland County.

A search to identify the military service of George Seaton in the War of the Revolution is being made at the present time, 1945. Amberson Seaton, his grandson, states unequivocally that George Seaton saw service in this war; and although he was an old man at the time, 1907, when

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\*THE SEATON FAMILY by Oron A. Seaton.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

this testimony\* was given and without education, yet his memory seems entirely clear, with that capacity for remembering certain details in the past which seems peculiar to old people. Further evidence,\*\* furnished by Miss Imma E. Jackson of Washington Court House, Ohio, a descendant of George Seaton's daughter Jane, indicates that the George Seaton who served in Captain William Crawford's company, Washington County, was the George Seaton who settled at Ligonier.

When George Seaton came to America, he evidently caught the revolutionary ferment which was sweeping the country and took sides with the colonists against England. Perhaps he carried with him, from Ireland, a resentment of British mercantilism which operated against the economic interests of northern Ireland as well as the American colonies. At any rate, he seems to have joined the Revolutionary forces and to have served in that army which included about ninety thousand officers and privates or about one man in sixteen of fighting age at the close of hostilities in 1781.\*\*\*

After the war he took up farming, belonging with his family to that large group of settlers of English, Scotch and Scotch-Irish origin who made up 75.2% of the population. In the frontier regions small farmers were dominant, and it

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\*Letter to Margaret L. Hukill (Mrs. George P., dec.).

\*\*Letter to Jane S. Crosby, Mar. 20, 1945.

\*\*\*BASIC HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES by Charles and Mary Beard.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

is presumed that George Seaton was entitled to vote since he owned land. Whether he bought this land or claimed it through settlement, one is not certain; but in his will he makes disposition of his farm and property, so that one knows he owned land at the time of his death in 1826.

By the close of the Revolution the Seatons had undoubtedly established themselves in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. This was a time of change and uncertainty, but the democratic ideas released by the Revolution prevailed in the government, and many of the old patterns which had held sway under Great Britain were cast off. Lands on the frontier, which terminated at Pittsburgh, were taken up by soldiers who had served in the Revolution, by various land companies, and by settlers moving west and also coming as the Seatons had come, from Scotland and northern Ireland.

The Quaker background of Philadelphia remained predominant in the east, but even Philadelphia represented at that time more of a variation in racial stocks than New York; and Pennsylvania received a larger influx of the Scotch-Irish than any other state. This group numbered about seventy thousand at the end of the provincial era.\*

The constitution of Pennsylvania in 1776 was accounted the most radical of that time; and the new constitution of 1790, though more conserva-

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\*Pamphlet issued by the Department of Public Instruction, The Pennsylvania Historical Commission, Harrisburg, 1942.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

tive, was still liberal in spirit--due in large part to the independence and free-thinking of the Scotch-Irish inheritance, the tolerance of the Quakers, and to the high degree of literacy which obtained among both groups, the Scotch-Irish ministry being noted for its insistence upon literacy for the reading of the Bible and for its emphasis upon education.

The levelling of class distinctions proceeded rapidly, as it had in fact since the first settlements were planted. "History is full of the sound of wooden shoes going upstairs and the patter of silken slippers coming downstairs," according to Voltaire; and certainly this period in American life offered many illustrations, with new groups of artisans, farmers and merchants becoming more prominent and other groups which had included the Tory class being reduced in importance, as the Seatons had been in Scotland after the fall of the Stuarts.

Under these conditions, George and Nancy Seaton lived on their farm, reared their children and added, one supposes, to their land. George Seaton's life extended through the administrations of Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe. The children who had come with them from County Tyrone and those who were born in Pennsylvania grew up as sturdy young Americans.

These children were William, John, Robert, Elizabeth, Thomas, George, Jane, Margaret, Mary, Amberson and Agnes (or Nancy). However, the order in which they are named may not be correct

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

as some records\* indicate that Thomas was eight years younger than Agnes (or Nancy) while other records\*\* show him to have been two years older. There may also have been a son James who went to Kentucky as a young man.

Concerning these children,\*\*\* Amberson Seaton writes that William became a minister and lived in Lucas County, Ohio; John became a doctor and went to Tennessee. Another member of the family (a granddaughter, Mrs. Morrow) says that John Seaton lived in Washington, D.C. The father of Amberson Seaton, Alexander White Seaton, corresponded with him up to 1853.

Robert became a tanner. Elizabeth (also called Margaret) died at twelve years of age soon after the family came to America. Thomas became a saddler, learning his trade in Youngstown, Westmoreland County. He married Elizabeth (or Betsy) Mavis, of German descent, and they had three children: Margaret, Robert and Jackson.

Thomas Seaton settled later in Venango County; his name appears on the Franklin Muster Roll of 1823. His daughter Margaret married Robert Lamberton of Franklin in 1837; his son Robert married Mary Jane Locke, and his son Jackson married Rebecca Locke. Mary Jane and Rebecca were sisters, the daughters of a Methodist min-

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\*Franklin, Pa., Old Cemetery Roll; Franklin, Pa., Muster Roll of 1823.

\*\*THE LAMBERTON MEMORIAL by Edwin H. Lamberton and S. J. M. Eaton, 1885.

\*\*\*THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton, pp. 345, 346.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

ister. The families of Margaret Seaton Lamber-ton and Jackson Seaton resided in Franklin for many years, from whom there is a large connection.

The fifth\* son, George, became a hatter and lived in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. His daughter Jane married a Morrow of Altoona in 1816. The second\*\* daughter of George and Nancy Seaton, named Jane, married Richard Jackson,\*\*\* a younger son of a distinguished Scotch-Irish family resident in County Donegal, Ireland, whose coming to America coincided with that of the Blair, White, Mellon and Hunies families. The Jacksons lived mainly in Unity township, Westmoreland County, near the village of Crabtree, and are buried in the old St. Clair Cemetery at Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Jane Seaton Jackson died in 1875, when more than a hundred years of age.

The third\*\*\*\* daughter Margaret married John Ausstraw, and had four children; after his death she married Nathaniel Edmar, and had one daughter by him. The fourth\*\*\*\*\* daughter Mary (or Polly) married an Alexander. The sixth\*\*\*\*\* son Amberson became a tailor and lived in Logansport, Ohio; he married Betsy McClelland. The last\*\*\*\*\* child Agnes (or Nancy) married George

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\*Order uncertain.

\*\*Ibid.

\*\*\*Letter of Emma B. Jackson to Jane S. Crosby, Mar. 20, 1945.

\*\*\*\*Order uncertain.

\*\*\*\*\*Ibid.

\*\*\*\*\*Ibid.

\*\*\*\*\*Ibid.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

McClelland, and was the little girl who stood by her mother, clinging to her skirts, as the two ladies who were so beautifully dressed said goodbye to their sister and did not look back.

Nancy Amberson Seaton, the mother of these children, must have died in 1799 or in 1800, for George Seaton took for his second wife Martha Ausstraw, a widow, whose maiden name was James, a daughter of Henry James of County Derry, Ireland, where Martha was born. By her, George Seaton had two sons: David, born in February, 1802, who married Catherine Piper in 1826; and Alexander White, born May 23, 1804, who married Phoebe Griffin in 1835.

Alexander White Seaton was the father of Amberson Seaton who has supplied some of the information for this account. Amberson Seaton lived in Tryon, Lincoln County, Oklahoma, in 1907, the date of several letters to Margaret Lamberton Hukill and others to which reference has been given. He volunteered\* in 1861 and served three years in Company H, Sixteenth Ohio, in the Civil War. He was married in 1880 to Sarah Ann Still in Benton County, Arkansas, and had three sons: George, Samuel A., and Alexander White.

The will of George Seaton, dated August 28, 1826, was found and copied by Anna Dale Alexander in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, in October, 1929. In this will George Seaton appears to have remembered some of his children much more generously than others; but it must be remembered that the three daughters who received the

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\*THE SEATON FAMILY by Oren A. Seaton.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

least were all married and in the case of Jane and Agnes (or Nancy) to men who were substantial citizens at that time. This may account for what would otherwise seem an unjust distribution.

The will\* of George Seaton follows:

"I will and bequeath to my well-beloved wife Martha one horse and one cow, all my household and kitchen furniture, excepting such part as I shall hereafter mention for the use of my daughter Margaret. I also bequeath to my said wife the use of the back room or any one of the rooms upstairs she may choose and a decent support off my farm during her natural life or so long as she may remain my widow.

"Item: I will and bequeath to my son Ambersson Seaton the sum of fifty dollars to be paid by my son Alexander in property as follows, to wit, twenty-five dollars in three years after my decease and twenty-five dollars the following year.

"Item: I will and bequeath to my daughter Margaret the horse creature and the cow she claims, her bed and bedding, saddle and bridle and a bureau. I also bequeath to her the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars to be paid, also, by my son Alexander in property, to wit, twenty-five dollars five years after my decease and twenty-five dollars annually until the whole is paid.

"Item: I will and bequeath to my sons Wil-

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\*Copy sent to Jane S. Crosby by Mabel Chadwick Preston (Mrs. George K.).

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

liam, Robert, Thomas, George and David and to the child of my son John, deceased, and also to my daughter Mary who intermarried with John Alexander, Jane who intermarried with Richard Jackson, and Nancy who intermarried with George McClelland the sum of fifteen cents each.

"Item: I will and bequeath to my son Alexander Seaton the farm on which I now live together with all the residue of my personal estate not heretofore devised and bequeathed, he paying the debts and legacies herein before mentioned, and I also do hereby constitute and appoint my son Alexander Seaton Executor of this my last will and testament.

"Twenty-eighth day of August, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six."

The family Bible of George and Nancy Amberson Seaton appears to have been lost. Amberson Seaton, the grandson of George, suggests that it fell into the hands of the Ausstraws at the death of George Seaton's second wife, Martha. He states that his grandmother, Martha James (Ausstraw) Seaton made her home with her son Alexander White Seaton (the father of Amberson) until a short time before her death. She went to visit Joseph Ausstraw, her son by her first marriage, and while making this visit became ill and died. In this way, the Bible which she had brought with her passed into Joseph Ausstraw's hands. Amberson Seaton says that Joseph Ausstraw refused to give up the Bible and other valuable papers, and as his half-brother Alexander White Seaton did not wish to go to law about the matter, the Bible was lost.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Another suggestion\* is that the Seaton Bible was left with one of the children of George and Nancy Amerson Seaton, and that it was the Ausstraw Bible, containing also the record of the births of the second wife's Seaton children, which was taken by Martha Seaton on her visit to Joseph Ausstraw. In any event, the Seaton Bible was apparently lost.

In 1919 Anna Dale Alexander visited the old Seaton farm, near Ligonier. A part of the farm had been sold in 1882; possibly it was kept intact until that time. The last Seaton living on the farm was a woman, "Aunt Sade," whose heirs sold the last of the farm in 1917 to R. C. Knox. According to C. M. McCune, a banker, the old house was torn down in 1901. A man ninety years of age had told Mr. McCune that it was a log house, one and a half stories high with a front porch. The farm was one and a fourth miles square with an original patent from William Penn. There were supposed to be coal deposits under the farm. The old road from Ligonier made the distance three and a half miles, but a shorter road makes it about one and a half miles, at the time the visit of Mrs. Alexander was made, in 1919. By correspondence\*\* with the Recorders' Offices of Greensburg and Johnstown, Pennsylvania, no record could be found of the sale to R. C. Knox.

This farm near Ligonier appears to have been the one left by George Seaton to his son Alexan-

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\*Helen Alexander Burr (Mrs. James R.) Franklin, Pa.

\*\*Letter to Jane S. Crosby, Feb. 10, 1945.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

der White. In 1919 there were a number of Seatons resident in that section: Thomas Seaton of Mount Pleasant, near Greensburg; John Seaton of Bolivar, the next station to Greensburg; Alexander Seaton who lived eight miles from Ligonier and whose daughter, Mrs. Sarah Hoover, took Mrs. Alexander to call on her father. In the graveyard was the tomb of a James Seaton who died in 1838.

According to family accounts\* there was an Alexander Seaton who had a fine farm at Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania, where he was engaged in raising cattle. On this farm was a sulphur spring. This may have been the Alexander White Seaton, son of George, who inherited the farm at Ligonier. However, among the children of the Alexander Seaton who lived at Slippery Rock were a son John who studied law and lived in Franklin, Pennsylvania, and other children:\*\* Alexander, Robert, James, Polly, Ann and Eliza. No mention is made of Amberson Seaton whom we know to be a son of Alexander White Seaton, inheritor of the Ligonier farm, so it seems more likely that the Slippery Rock farm belonged to a cousin of George Seaton's children; the similarity between the names of his children and those of George Seaton would indeed indicate some relationship.

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\*Anna Dale Alexander (Mrs. Thomas) Franklin, Pa.

\*\*Margaret Lamberton Hukill (Mrs. George P., dec.).

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Margaret Seaton, the daughter of Thomas and a granddaughter of George, visited this farm when she was a young girl, and she thought that the Alexander Seaton who owned it was a first or second cousin of her father. However, Martha Seaton, the second wife of George, was present at the time, and it seems more likely that she would have been visiting her son Alexander rather than one of the Seaton cousins. It is difficult, therefore, definitely to identify the Alexander Seaton who owned the Slippery Rock farm.

Records from the Register and Recorder of Butler County, Pennsylvania, show that a deed was issued from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Alexander Seaton and Joseph Cummings, Executor of Robert Seaton, deceased, dated March 23, 1858, for 450 acres and 105 perches in Venango and Marion townships for \$90.13, recorded in Deed Book 209, page 493.

Further records show a deed from John R. Harris to Alexander Seaton, dated June 16, 1857, for one half acre in Harrisville Borough for \$100.60, recorded in Deed Book "Z," page 608; and a deed from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Alexander Seaton, March 31, 1857, for 47 acres and 13 perches in Mercer township for \$9.42, recorded in Deed Book 34, page 76; and a deed from Alexander Buchanan to Alexander Seaton, Esq., dated June 17, 1857, for 25 acres and 32 perches in Mercer township for \$42.00, recorded in Deed Book 117, page 4; and a deed from the Sheriff, not dated, to Alexander Seaton for 100 acres in Mercer township, for \$166.00, recorded in Sheriff's Deed Book 2, page 22.

These records indicate that an Alexander

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Seaton acquired land in Butler County at these various times. Since the name recorded is given as "Alexander Seaton," not "Alexander White Seaton" (which Amberson Seaton gives as the full name of his father) one assumes he was not the son of George Seaton; though in his will George Seaton mentions the son who inherited the Ligonier farm as "Alexander," not "Alexander White." In any event, it seems likely that the Alexander Seaton whose name is recorded as recipient of the deeds may have been the same Alexander Seaton who owned the farm at Slippery Rock. The possibility exists also that he was a son of George Seaton.

Margaret Seaton's visit to the Slippery Rock farm probably occurred about 1830, when she was fifteen years of age, though it may have been a few years earlier or later. She was taken to the farm by her father, Thomas Seaton, who had been living with his family in Venango County, Pennsylvania, since 1819. Probably they made the trip by horseback, and when they reached the farm Martha Seaton was also mounted. She patted Margaret on the shoulder and said, "You are Peggy. I am your grandmother." However, she was in fact the step-grandmother, as Thomas Seaton's mother was Nancy, the first wife of George Seaton.

The memory of this visit must have remained vividly in Margaret Seaton's mind; years afterward, she must have described it to her children as the material for the preceding paragraph.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

was taken from the notes of her daughter Margaret.\*

As a grandmother, Margaret Seaton Lamberton is remembered by her granddaughter, Emma Gillilan Thomas,\*\* as an old lady who wore white lace caps with lavender bows. When she was young, her hair had been a light red; she had a clear, blond complexion and was of medium height. She possessed a quick, keen sense of humor, held many of the superstitions of the Scotch-Irish strain, and was interested in the activities of all her grandchildren, especially in their love affairs and weddings. Weddings were her special delight.

It is with Thomas Seaton, the father of Margaret, and his sister Agnes (or Nancy) that the connection of the Seatons with Venango County is maintained. Thomas Seaton, the fourth\*\*\* son of George and Nancy Amberson Seaton, was born\*\*\*\* in Westmoreland County in 1778. As before stated, he married Elizabeth (or Betsy) Mavis who was born in 1792. About 1819, Thomas Seaton settled with his family in Venango County and lived there until his death in 1841; his wife died in 1852, and their names are recorded on

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\*Margaret Lamberton Hukill (Mrs. George P., dec.).

\*\*Mrs. Charles H. Thomas, Franklin, Pa.

\*\*\*Order uncertain.

\*\*\*\*THE LAMBERTON MEMORIAL by Edwin H. Lamberton and S. J. M. Eaton.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

the old Cemetery Roll,\* Franklin, Pennsylvania. Thomas Seaton served in the local militia, his name appearing on the Muster Roll of Franklin for 1823.

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In that same year he had his saddlery in a house owned by George McClelland, his brother-in-law, a short distance from the present site of the Exchange Bank and Trust Company, in Franklin. His home was on the south side of Elk Street, at the corner of Fourteenth, and is described\*\* as one of the substantial frame dwellings of that day. At the time of his death, Thomas Seaton also owned a farm in Venango County, located in Sugarcreek township, across the road from the farm later owned by his grandson, Robert Gilfillan Lamberton.

The children of Thomas and Elizabeth Mavis Seaton were Margaret, Robert and Jackson. Margaret was born in 1815 in Centre County,\*\*\* which indicates that her parents lived there after their residence in Westmoreland. She was married to Robert Lamberton in Franklin in 1837.

Like the Seatons, Robert Lamberton\*\*\*\* had come to America from northern Ireland, having been born in 1809 at Gorton Raid, near Londonderry, the son of William and Elizabeth Gil-

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\*Which gives Thomas's age as 53; his wife's as 65, by which count Thomas was born in 1788, his wife in 1787.

\*\*History of Venango County, 1890, p. 378.

\*\*\*Emma Gilfillan Thomas (Mrs. Charles H.) Franklin, Pa.

\*\*\*\*THE LAMBERTON MEMORIAL by Edwin H. Lamberton and S. J. M. Eaton, 1885.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

fillan Lamberton. Like the Seatons, also, his forebears had been adherents of the Bruces and had migrated to Ireland from a former home in Scotland, near Berwick-on-Tweed.

Robert Lamberton came to America in 1830 at the age of twenty-one, landing at Quebec. Having an uncle in Plum township, Venango County, he made his way there and later to Franklin which then had a population of five hundred. He first obtained work on the French Creek Canal and then at the "Sam Hays Forge."

Later he opened a store, became a merchant, then a manufacturer and banker. In the Lamberton store in Franklin were handled beef and pork, crockery and glassware, and all the products of the factory and loom of that time; he also operated stores in Dempseytown and Coopers-town. By 1840 there were many iron furnaces in the country, and Robert Lamberton was engaged in this business for some years and also erected mills for the manufacture of flour and lumber. One of the stones from his grist mill is now on the property of his granddaughter, Emma Gilfillan Thomas, at Sugarcreek. (Recently sold)

When\* the tide of oil production swept through western Pennsylvania in 1859, many citizens found it necessary to have a depository for their money, and since Robert Lamberton owned a large safe they would bring it in to him and he would give them credit on his books. With char-

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\*VENANGO COUNTY, HER PIONEERS AND PEOPLE by Charles Babcock. Quoted in HISTORY OF NORTH-WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA, by Joseph Reisenman, Jr., Lewis Historical Pub. Co.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

acteristic sagacity, he saw that the community needed a bank, and when he built the Lamberton homestead in 1860 (on the present site of the Y.M.C.A.) he built a banking room in the corner, where he conducted a regular banking business under the name R. Lamberton, Banker.

This was the first bank in Venango County and was continued under Robert Lamberton's management until 1873, when his interests were purchased by his son Robert G. Lamberton, his son-in-law Calvin W. Gilfillan and R. L. Cochran who organized the Lamberton Savings Bank, with Calvin W. Gilfillan as president. In company with Calvin W. Gilfillan, Robert Lamberton was also engaged in banking in Oil City; and the Lamberton Savings Bank in Franklin continued in business until 1899, when the Lamberton National Bank was organized; this bank continued in business until December 20, 1941, completing a period of eighty-one years during which the Lamberton family had been engaged in the management of banks in Franklin.

In 1861 Robert Lamberton was elected Associate Judge of the courts of Venango County, holding this office for five years. He also served as one of the trustees of the First Presbyterian Church and as ruling elder, and assisted in fitting out volunteers during the Civil War.

In appearance, Robert Lamberton was rather austere, with deep-set, piercing eyes, and chiselled features; in his later years he wore white sideburns. A shrewd judge of character, he possessed the qualities of industry, energy and tenacity, so characteristic of the Scotch-Irish; and an artist who employed the medium of steel

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

engraving or etching would have made the most significant study of him.

After his death in 1885, Mrs. Lamberton continued to live in the old home on Thirteenth Street for some years; her niece, Lydia Seaton Shaffer, daughter of Jackson Seaton, lived with her. Later this home was bought by Mrs. William J. Lamberton, and still later it was given by her to the Y.M.C.A. This home served as a meeting place and haven for many of the Scotch-Irish settlers who came to Pennsylvania, and Robert Lamberton arranged for the passage from Ireland of all his brothers and sisters, with the exception of his brother John who preferred to remain on the old farm near Londonderry.

For the last years of her life, Mrs. Lamberton lived in the red brick house on Elk Street, now the Buchanan Funeral Home. For twenty years she was almost blind; according to the custom of the day, she wore deep mourning for her husband. Her daughter Margaret lived with her during these later years until her death in 1911, at the age of ninety-six.

The children\* of Robert and Margaret Seaton Lamberton were William John, born 1838, married Sarah L. Raymond 1869, died 1892; Elizabeth A., born 1839, married Calvin W. Gilfillan 1858, died 1900; Lewis Thomas, born 1841, married Martha A. Mitchell 1862, died 1931; Samuel Harkness, born 1844, married Ann Eliza Smith, died 1929; Robert Gilfillan, born 1848, married Luella Chess 1873, married the second time Jessie

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\*THE LAMBERTON MEMORIAL by Edwin H. Lamberton and S. J. M. Eaton, 1885.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Judson 1880, died 1923; Marion, born 1850, died 1850; Margaret Jane, born 1852, married George P. Hukill 1876, died 1924; Edwin Huston, born 1854, married Annie Carrie Kirker 1885, died 1938; and Harry, born 1858, married Virginia Ella Hughes, died 1932.

Robert Seaton, the brother of Margaret and son of Thomas, married Mary Jane Locke as previously stated, and their children were Thomas, Lamberton, George (still living in Ohio) and Lorinda who married Dr. MacFarland.

Jackson Seaton,\* the brother of Margaret and Robert and son of Thomas, was born in 1820 after the family had come to Venango County. He married Rebecca Locke (sister of Mary Jane Locke) who was born in 1828; their children were William D. who married Ella Beeman; Margaret who married Lewis Whitling; Elizabeth who married William C. DeWoody; Ida who married Zadoc Ingram; Agnes who married Charles Baldwin; Mary who married William Ewing; Lydia who married Samuel Shaffer; and Maude who married Thomas Nicklin.

Jackson and Rebecca Seaton lived in Venango County for many years, leaving a number of descendants resident in Franklin and Venango County. Jackson Seaton died in 1898 and Rebecca Locke Seaton died in 1909.

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Agnes (or Nancy) Seaton, the last\*\* child of

\*Lydia Seaton Shaffer (Mrs. Samuel), Franklin, Pa.

\*\*Order uncertain.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

George and Nancy Amberson Seaton and the sister of Thomas, also migrated to Venango County, as early as 1795 according to one account,\* but possibly later. She was called "Nancy" as well as "Agnes," and in her father's will she is spoken of as "Nancy" and was no doubt named for her mother, Nancy Amberson Seaton. However, in nearly all the later family records and in the histories of Venango County, she is mentioned as "Agnes" Seaton; and for this reason the name "Agnes" was used in this account.

The name "Agnes" has also been repeated in succeeding generations: Agnes Seaton Baldwin, daughter of Jackson and Rebecca Locke Seaton; Agnes Dale Gibson, daughter of Samuel Futhey and Eliza McClelland Dale; Agnes McClelland Mason, daughter of John and Eleanor Purviance McClelland; Virginia Agnes Mason Diehl, daughter of Alfred and May Yolters Mason; Agnes Alexander Rush, daughter of Thomas and Anna Dale Alexander; and Agnes Locke Crosby, daughter of James Pillsbury and Alice Gibson Locke.

It is through the descendants of Agnes Seaton that the legend of the romantic marriage of George Seaton and Nancy Amberson has come to be woven as a persistent strand in the Seaton story. Through the descendants of Agnes Seaton, this record will connect with forthcoming histories of the McClellands, Snowdens, Woodburns and Crosbys.

According to Amberson Seaton, the halfbrother of Agnes, she was married first to William

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\*Anna Dale Alexander (Mrs. Thomas), Franklin, Pa.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Ogden and later to George McClelland. After the death of her husband William Ogden, she had a son who was named William for his father. Amberson Seaton states that Agnes Seaton Ogden bound this son to Alexander White Seaton, father of Amberson, until he should be twenty-one years of age. However, this statement appears to be incorrect as Alexander White Seaton was not born till 1804, and the child William Ogden was born before the marriage of Agnes to George McClelland; their first child Jane was born in Sugarcreek, Venango County, in 1804. It would not seem credible that Agnes bound her son to a child younger than he, although Amberson Seaton insists that she did.

It seems more likely to suppose that the child William Ogden was bound instead to one of Agnes' older brothers--possibly to her brother Robert who was a tanner and went "west" to Butler County--as other accounts state that he was reared by Robert Seaton. Possibly Agnes went to Butler County with her brother Robert as early as 1795. She may have married William Ogden there, and after his death may have bound her son William to Robert Seaton. However, no record of such an indenture which was common at that time has yet been found either in Butler or Westmoreland counties.

Records from the Register and Recorder of Butler County show that a deed from Simon Grossman and Maria Grossman, his wife, was issued to Robert F. Seaton, dated November 24, 1857, for 56 acres and 49 perches in Marion township, for \$900.00, recorded in Deed Book 41, page 384; and a deed from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Robert Seaton, dated February 3, 1879, for

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

418 acres and 91 perches in Mercer township, for \$168.88, recorded in Deed Book 58, page 12; a deed from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to Alexander Seaton and Joseph Cummings, Executors of Robert Seaton, deceased, dated March 23, 1858, for 450 acres, indicates that the deed of 1879 must refer to a Robert Seaton who evidently succeeded the Robert F. Seaton who received the deed of 1857. Possibly the Robert Seaton who was deceased in 1858 was the brother of Agnes; the Robert Seaton mentioned in the deed of 1879 may have been the son of Agnes' brother or possibly the son of Thomas and Elizabeth Mavis Seaton.

Amberson Seaton states that George McClelland had been married before his marriage with Agnes; that he lost his wife, and had a son by her at the time he married Agnes. However, no record of this marriage of George McClelland's nor of his infant son has been found. According to all other family accounts and to Venango County histories, the first child of George McClelland was Jane, who was born in 1804 in Venango County.

George McClelland was born in 1780, in Balla Bay, County Monaghan, Ireland, not far from County Tyrone, the home of the Seatons. He was a son of George and Jane (or Janet) McKnight McClelland, and the family were originally from Scotland before they migrated to Ireland. They are said\* to have been famous in the disturbance

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\*HISTORY OF THE ALLEGHENY VALLEY, PENNSYLVANIA, account written by Leah Dale Fassett (Mrs. Lewis H., dec.).

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

of the Black Douglas, and after the destruction of Douglas castle, in which "the McClelland" took a part, that branch of the family changed the coat-of-arms from a dexter arms embossed fessways, holding in the hand a sword in pale--the point enfield with a saracen's head--to a culverin.

About 1795 George McClelland came to America. He was then a youth of fifteen, so very likely he came in company with other Scotch-Irish settlers who probably had friends in Westmoreland County.

Another Scotch-Irish settler whose course somewhat parallels that of George McClelland was John Hanna.\* Born in County Down, Ireland, he came to America in 1796, landing in New Castle, Delaware, and came into Venango County in 1802, where his first settlement was made on a tract of land later owned by George McClelland's son, Major George Croghan McClelland.

According to one account,\*\* George McClelland migrated to America in order to escape political charges in Ireland; yet it does not seem likely that a boy of fifteen would have been involved in a political revolt. At any rate, he must have established himself in Westmoreland County, near Ligonier, and soon after his arrival may have become acquainted with the Seatons. Probably he worked as a farmer and trader, the chief occupations of that period in western Pennsylvania. In this section, he must have heard often of George Croghan, the early

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\*HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, 1890.

\*\*George Randolph Snowden, grandson (dec.).

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

pioneer trader and speculator in land who died in 1782. In some way George Croghan must have influenced him, for he named a son either for the famous trader, or possibly for Colonel George Croghan, the hero of Fort Stephenson in the War of 1812.

George McClelland and Agnes Seaton were married, probably in 1801 or 1802, and as a young couple set their faces toward Venango County, then a provisional county and attached to Mercer County for judicial purposes. By the spring of 1802 they had laid down their roots in what was then Frenchcreek township and included the present townships of Frenchcreek, Sandycreek, Cranberry, Victory and Mineral. Most of the settlers who entered this section came from Westmoreland and Washington Counties, so that George and Agnes McClelland became a part of the stream of settlement then moving north and northwest from the southwestern counties of Pennsylvania.

In the year 1802, young Robert McCalmont\* crossed the Allegheny at Kittanning (as the McClellands must have done, also) and on his way to Franklin stopped over night at George McClelland's public house, located at Sandycreek. This reference to Sandycreek may mean the creek itself, running between the later Victory and Sandycreek townships, or it may signify location in what was later Sandycreek township. From this account, we know that George McClelland had taken up land in Venango County and was keeping a public house, probably by the spring of 1802.

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\*HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, 1879, p. 646.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

In January 21, 1859, the heirs of George McClelland sold to Reuben Doutts "all that certain piece or parcel of land containing four hundred acres of the same, more or less bounded by lands of Eaton Cathers Morrison and others, situated in Sandycreek township, Venango County, and being the same tract of land on which George McClelland made an actual settlement." Oil was discovered in August of that same year.

George McClelland may have obtained this land from the Holland or Bingham land companies or from the government. The price of government lands was two dollars per acre, and a settler could enter a quarter section (one hundred and sixty acres) by paying down eighty dollars, the remainder to be paid at the rate of eighty dollars a year and not liable to tax till the expiration of five years. Some of the land was taken up by settlers who, to gain one hundred acres, would improve four hundred.

It is possible that George and Agnes McClelland had come into Venango County as early as 1801, taking up land at that time when George was twenty-one; possibly the land they obtained came from the grants to Revolutionary soldiers and was secured through the service of George Seaton, Agnes's father. These theories remain suppositions; but it is certain that the McClellands had made a settlement and were established at Sandycreek in 1802, at the time of the visit of Robert McCalmont.

According to some accounts,\* George McClelland had also settled near Springville in 1803,

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\*HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, 1890, p. 741.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

in the present Victory township. The house where the McClellands lived at that time was on the present Pittsburgh road, at the top of the hill just beyond Pecan hill, also known as the Asa Balliet house; it stood empty for many years and was not torn down till 1941. By 1804, George McClelland had probably acquired land in Sugarcreek township as well, for the first child Jane was born to George and Agnes McClelland on February 28, 1804 in Sugarcreek; and it would seem that the family was living there at that time. Family accounts\* state that George McClelland acquired land at various times, and this explanation clarifies the settlements in the three different townships: Sandycreek, Victory and Sugarcreek.

During these early years, George McClelland\*\* used to ride to Butler and Pittsburgh for supplies which were carried home on the backs of horses. While he was away, his wife suffered much from fear of the Indians, but was never molested. They had but one white family of neighbors who were so poor that they sometimes ate buds off the trees and were often fed by Agnes McClelland. In 1800, the population of Venango County did not exceed 1,130.

In 1806 the McClellands came to Franklin which was then a small village. Fort Franklin stood about one hundred and eighty rods above the mouth of French creek, and up to 1796 held

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\*Eliza McClelland Dale (Mrs. Samuel F., dec.).

\*\*Ibid.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

a garrison of one hundred men. Later, what was known as the "Old Garrison" was erected at the mouth of French creek, and the troops removed there from Fort Franklin which was then abandoned; they were removed from the village of Franklin altogether in 1803, and after that time the "Old Garrison" served as a jail till 1819. There were but five families in Franklin in the summer of 1800; in 1802 the families of Edward Hale, George Power, Abraham Selders, John Fowler, Judge Heron, Alexander McDowell and Philip Houser were living there.

George McClelland's name appears on the list of taxable inhabitants of Irwin township, Venango County in 1805 (spelled George McLellen). Probably his lands in the other townships were not yet liable to taxation, as they were not taken up till 1802 or 1801, at the earliest. In 1805 the "provisional" county of Venango was organized, the inhabitants being granted full powers and privileges and provided for the election of officers; the subdivision of the county into townships occurred in 1806.

The principal Deputy Surveyor before the organization of the county was Thomas McDowell; after the first organization of Venango in 1800, which preceded the granting of full powers, Samuel Dale of Union County was appointed Deputy Surveyor and continued in office until 1812.

He made a study of the Indian character, gaining the confidence of the Seneca's great chief, Cornplanter, to such a degree that he was one of the principal means of reconciling the Indians of Venango County to the peaceable settlement of the land by the white men. In the War of 1812, he served as Colonel, marching

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

his troops to Erie to assist in the protection of the vessels while crossing the bar. Colonel Dale made another forced march to aid in the defense of Erie, after the burning of Buffalo, in 1814. In 1818 he went to Lancaster, where he became an Associate Judge of the court of common pleas of Lancaster County until his death in 1842.

Samuel Futhey Dale, the son of Colonel Dale, became the husband of George and Agnes McClelland's daughter Eliza. Originally from England, the forebears of Colonel Dale had been settled in County Monaghan, Ireland--also the former home of George McClelland--since 1690.

The first recorded election of Venango County gives the name of George McClelland as one of the three candidates for coroner. He received thirty-seven votes and was defeated by Marcus Hulings. At that time George McClelland was twenty-five years old and already showed a talent for politics, borne out in the later offices which he held: first Burgess\* of Franklin, in 1808 elected County Commissioner, in 1814 and 1815 appointed County Treasurer, in 1818 elected County Auditor, in 1821 and 1824 again appointed County Treasurer.

In 1827 and 1828 Hugh McClelland, a cousin\*\* of George and also a native of the north of Ireland, followed him as County Treasurer. Hugh McClelland was elected to the State Assembly from Venango County in 1835.

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\*George Randolph Snowden (dec.), Philadelphia.

\*\*Anna Dale Alexander (Mrs. Thomas) Franklin, Pa.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

He owned considerable property in Franklin, above Liberty and Fifteenth streets, which later passed to the Plumer connection of the family, after Hugh McClelland's heirs in Ireland had given up their claim. He also owned a store on Buffalo Street, next to the McCalmont house (now the Franklin Library) and across from what was then the Academy.

When he was a young boy, George Croghan McClelland, a son of George and Agnes McClelland, helped him in this store and also attended the Academy, where the Rev. Nathaniel Randolph Snowden had a Latin school, about 1830-1832. Other students who undoubtedly attended this school were Jesse L. Reno, Alexander Hays, John L. McCalmont and Washington L. Bowman. These four boys,\* together with George Croghan McClelland, all graduated from West Point Military Academy during the 1840's, some of them achieving great distinction.

George Croghan McClelland served\*\* as second lieutenant\*\*\* in the Mexican War, taking an active part in all of General Winfield Scott's battles, from the siege of Vera Cruz to the capture of Mexico City. During the Civil War he served as a captain for two years with the fifth Pennsylvania cavalry, being responsible for the retaking of Williamsburg after a furious engagement. His brother Joseph also served in the Civil War, taking part in a number of campaigns, among them those of General Burnside.

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\*George Randolph Snowden (dec.), Philadelphia.

\*\*HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, 1919.

\*\*\*11th Regiment, U.S. Infantry.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Both Alexander Hays and Jesse L. Reno also served as second lieutenants in the Mexican War, and in the Civil War both won fame and glory; serving as brigadier-general and major-general, respectively. General Hays was killed at the Battle of the Wilderness and General Reno at South Mountain.

George McClelland's name appears in 1823 on the Muster Roll of the Venango Guards, the first military organization in the county. On this roll his age is given as forty-five, which, if the record is correct, would make his birth in 1778 instead of 1780. Thomas Seaton, the brother of Agnes, also served in this organization, his age being given as thirty-five\* at the time. The population of Franklin in 1823 was about two hundred and fifty, according to testimony given by Levi Dodd.

In 1819, George McClelland took over the public house later known as the United States Hotel. This was a frame building erected\*\* by Samuel Plumer in 1806 and remains one of the oldest existing landmarks in Franklin. At the front, under what is now McGuire's store, is a foundation stone, partly covered over, marked 1802, so it seems likely that the building was started at that time. The cellar is made of cut stone; the doors are solid walnut in two differ-

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\*Making his birth date 1788, whereas it is given as 1773 in THE LAMBERTON MEMORIAL by Edwin H. Lambertson and S. J. M. Eaton.

\*\*HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, 1890.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

ent patterns; and the floor boards are cherry. This building was later enlarged, and during the early and middle years of its existence saw most of the men who were developing the town and vicinity of Franklin as they passed through its doors and stood in the public rooms.

By the time he took over this hotel at the age of thirty-nine, all the children of George and Agnes McClelland had been born, with the exception of George Croghan who was born in the hotel, November 28, 1819. At the time the family went to live in the hotel the children's ages were Jane, fifteen; John, thirteen; Margaret, twelve; Joseph, ten; Nancy, eight; and Eliza, three. There was also a daughter Harriet who did not live to maturity.

In the VENANGO HERALD, Vol. I, No. 22, of January 17, 1821, George McClelland's advertisement reads:

"The subscriber respectfully informs the public that he continues to keep a house of entertainment, at his old stand in Franklin, sign of the 'Cross-Keys,' and flatters himself that he will be able to give good accomodation to his former customers and travelers and all others who may please to favor him with a call."

At that time\* tavern signs were frequently beautiful designs in wrought iron or on painted boards. A public house in Brownsville, Pennsylvania was also called sign of the "Cross-Keys," and the name referred to a curious displacement

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\*PIONEER LIFE IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA by J. E. Wright and Doris S. Corbett, Univ. of Pittsburgh Press.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

of a religious symbol used by the church, the Keys of St. Peter. Henry M. Brackinridge\* described the early innkeepers as follows: "The landlords or tavern-keepers are, in reality, the only lords we have in Pennsylvania; they possess a degree of intelligence and respectability of character which justly gives them an influence in public life."

This comment seems to bear application to the career of George McClelland who was extremely active in local and county politics from 1804 to 1824. Other early landlords in Franklin included George Power, James Kinnear, Edward Hale, Marcus Hulings, Weldin Adams, A. McCalmont, John Evans and Arthur Robinson. George Power and James Kinnear were in business in 1823.

Before he took over the sign of the "Cross-Keys," George McClelland financed, in 1817, the first stage from Franklin to Butler, known as the Huckleberry Stage. Some years later John Bredin, afterward President Judge of Butler County, "rode the district" from Butler to Franklin, and in 1829 married Nancy, the daughter of George and Agnes McClelland. The eldest son of John and Nancy McClelland Bredin became judge of the court over which his father had presided.

In April, 1830, Edmund Pearce took over the sign of the "Cross-Keys," renaming it the "Rising Sun Inn," and his advertisement in the DEMOCRATIC REPUBLICAN of April 1, 1830, reads as follows:

"Edmund Pearce respectfully informs his friends and the public in general that he has

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\*Ibid.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

taken that well-known tavern stand, the "Rising Sun Inn," on the diamond, nearly opposite the Court House, in the borough of Franklin, formerly occupied by George McClelland, Esq. The house is large and commodious; the stables roomy and good. The bar will at all times be furnished with the best of liquors, and his table with plenty of the best the market can afford. All those who favor him with a call may restassured that every exertion will be made to render general satisfaction."

During the stirring days of the sixties, this well-known public house, then called the "United States Hotel," was operated by Lafayette Buzzell, whose daughter, Miss Mary Buzzell, now lives in the old building.\*

While George McClelland kept the sign of the "Cross-Keys" (later the United States Hotel), he also operated a grist mill, built by John Stevens at Sandycreek. When he was succeeded as landlord by Edmund Pearce, George McClelland and his family lived on the property\*\* which he owned next door to the public house; the livery stable\*\*\* operated in connection with the inn was also owned by him. One account\*\*\*\* states that George McClelland owned this public house; other accounts state that he operated it and that it was owned by Samuel Plumer whose store occupied the adjoining building in 1823.

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\*United States Apartments.

\*\*Designated as in-lot 140.

\*\*\*Designated as in-lot 139.

\*\*\*\*HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, J. H. Beers, 1919, Vol. II, page 805.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Samuel Plumer had come to Venango County, Jackson township, in 1800, where his son Arnold was born in 1801. In 1827 Arnold Plumer married George and Agnes McClelland's daughter Margaret. Arnold Plumer was elected sheriff before he was of age, running against his future father-in-law. Possessed of marked political acumen and business ability, he became one of the most important and influential men in western Pennsylvania.

Previously the Plumers had been settled in New England and later in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, where there may have been some acquaintance between them and the McClellands before both families came into Venango. A prior connection with the Dales, the family into which Eliza McClelland married in 1840, may have existed, also, as Colonel Samuel Dale (called "Judge Dale" in Lancaster) was widely known throughout the state.

With the Bredin and Purviance families of Butler County, into which Nancy and John McClelland married, the Seatons may very likely have been acquainted, since Robert Seaton lived in Butler County and Agnes herself may have lived there for a short time. George and Hugh McClelland owned eighty-four acres of land in Butler County, according to a deed\* of 1842.

With the Snowdens, into which family Jane McClelland married in 1833, any prior connection before Venango County seems less likely. The Snowdens had owned land in west New Jersey and

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\*Deed Book Q, page 170, Register & Recorder, Butler Co.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

in Pennsylvania since 1681, but in the eastern part of the state, where John Snowden had been a judge in Bucks County in 1715, and his sons Isaac and Jedidiah had materially aided the colonies during the Revolutionary War, both being signers of Continental currency. At the close of the Revolution Isaac Snowden\* was Treasurer of the city and county of Philadelphia.

By stretching further the threads of conjecture, it is possible that Thomas Seaton, a brother of Agnes McClelland's father, may have known in Carlisle, Dr. Lemuel Gustine, the Revolutionary officer and surgeon, whose grandson\*\* married Agnes' daughter Jane. Previous references have stated that Thomas Seaton came first to Carlisle before going to Westmoreland County and Dr. Gustine escaped to Carlisle after the massacre of Wyoming in 1778. It is possible that George and Agnes McClelland, on a trip to Pittsburgh or Kittanning, may have heard a sermon preached by the Rev. Nathaniel Randolph Snowden,\*\*\* after he came "west" from Harrisburg in 1805. (He was licensed by the Carlisle Presbytery in 1792.)

These suppositions regarding possible acquaintanceship may be without foundation in fact, yet their existence lies easily within the scope of credibility. More certain is the supposition that the young men who married the daughters of George and Agnes McClelland made

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\*OLD PHILADELPHIA FAMILIES, THE SNOWDENS by Frank Willing Leach, 1912, THE NORTH AMERICAN.

\*\*Dr. Nathaniel Duffield Snowden.

\*\*\*Father of Dr. Nathaniel Duffield Snowden.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

their acquaintance when they paid visits to the sign of the "Cross-Keys" as well as at the church and social affairs of the growing village. By marriage, the McClellands became connected with families prominent in state affairs--the Snowdens, Plumers, Lales, Bredins and Purviances, holding many offices in the state.

Jane, the first daughter, born in 1804, married Dr. Nathaniel Duffield Snowden\* in 1833, died in 1867; John, born in 1806,\*\* married Eleanor Purviance of Butler, died in 1837; Margaret, born in 1807,\*\*\* married Arnold Plumer\*\*\*\* in 1827, died in 1879; Joseph, born in 1809, married Lavinia Morrison, married the second time Carrie (maiden name unknown), died in 1899; Nancy, born in 1811, married Judge John Bredin of Butler in 1829, died in 1882; Eliza, born in 1816, married Samuel Futey Dale\*\*\*\*\* in 1840, died in 1901; George Croghan, born in 1819, married Ruth Rhodes, married the second time Abigail Childs Runninger, died 1888.

While conducting the sign of the "Cross-Keys," George McClelland also engaged in the publication of the VENANGO DEMOCRAT, the second newspaper to be published in Venango County. The first issue probably appeared in March, 1824, George McClelland & Company being the publishers. Since he was County Treasurer at the time,

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\*Died 1864.

\*\*Some accounts give 1807 as birth date.

\*\*\*According to tombstone, but possibly born in 1805.

\*\*\*\*Died 1869.

\*\*\*\*\*Died 1876.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

George McClelland undoubtedly found his paper a convenient medium for the advertising connected with that office. The junior member of the firm was John Little. The VENANGO DEMOCRAT was recognized as the Democratic party organ and continued under that name until it merged with the SPECTATOR in 1849.

George McClelland also built and operated a furnace, two miles this side of Doutts on Big Sandy; on the Pittsburgh road, one of the first in the county. According to the HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, 1890, his many activities included dealing in stock, buying in Venango and selling in distant markets. However, according to notes left by his daughter Eliza, her father never engaged in stock-dealing and did not die in New York state while on a selling expedition, but at his home in Franklin.

In politics, he was a Democrat, or Democratic-Republican as the party was first called, voting undoubtedly for the presidents Jefferson, Madison, Monroe and Jackson and not supporting John Quincy Adams. His religious affiliation was Presbyterian, the first organization of that denomination in Franklin taking place in 1817.

An old subscription paper,\* dated June 9, 1826, bears the signatures of George and also Hugh McClelland with twenty-eight others, agreeing to pay to the trustees various amounts in cash or in trade for the erection of a church. George McClelland agrees to pay one hundred and fifty dollars, in trade, this being the second contribution of one hundred and fifty dollars;

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\*HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, 1879.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

the other being that of Samuel Hays, in lumber, and the largest being that of Andrew Bowman for three hundred dollars, in shoes and leather.

From his portrait\* George McClelland appears to have been a man of strong physique, rather powerfully built, probably of more than medium height. His hair is slightly reddish in color. His eyes are large and blue-gray, the chin is well cut, the mouth firm but not hard. He was probably in his early or middle forties when this portrait was painted; he wears a black coat with a white stock, or neck-cloth. Looking at this portrait, one would judge him to be a man of energy and decision; and indeed all the existing accounts speak of his energetic qualities.

When he carved a roast at his table in the sign of the "Cross-Keys," one imagines that his hands moved skilfully and with dispatch. His reports as County Treasurer, among them the first published Tax Sale\*\* of Venango County, show him to have been painstaking and exact. Interested in the affairs of his day, he found an outlet for his energy in politics and publishing. Possessed of business ability, he built and operated a blast furnace, one of the flourishing industries of that period. As hotel-keeper, he must have been a shrewd judge of human nature, meeting often with the men who were engaged in developing the new county of Venango and having himself an active hand in the further-

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\*Owned by Anna Dale Alexander (Mrs. Thomas), Franklin, Pa., copy owned by Jane S. Crosby, Bradford, Pa.

\*\*HISTORY OF VENANGO COUNTY, 1879.

## THE SEATONS OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

ing of this development. By all the evidence which remains, George McClelland seems to have been able, energetic and substantial--a man of affairs in his own time and place.

He died February 18, 1834, at the age of fifty-four, having come many miles from County Monaghan, Ireland. His wife Agnes survived him until November 24, 1842, and they are buried in one grave in the Franklin cemetery.\*

Though he had established his roots so firmly in the new world and planted his seed, though he had contributed his strength and energy to the building of the new country, yet his thoughts must have strayed sometimes to the old. In George McClelland's hardy fibre, as in the Seatons and Lambertons, ran the long, tenacious memory of the Scotch-Irish. On his tombstone the inscription reads: "George McClelland, late of the North of Ireland."

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\*Dale lot.



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